
A NEW SPECIES OF *ARISTOLOCHIA* (ARISTOLOCHIACEAE) FROM VENEZUELA

Very little is published on the *Aristolochia* species of Venezuela. No floristic treatment exists and none of the available revisions treat all the Venezuelan species (Ahumada, 1967; Hoehne, 1942; Pfeifer, 1966). Bazzolo & Pfeifer (1978) revised the herbaceous, efimbriate species, but all other species must be identified using Hoehne (1942). This makes the identification of Venezuelan aristolochias unusually difficult. The following species was first collected in 1962, but only now can it be confidently described as new.

Aristolochia melgueiroi Barringer & Guánchez, sp. nov. TYPE: Venezuela. Territorio Federal Amazonas: Dept. Atures, along road between damsite of Río Cataniapo and Gavilán, 35–40 km SE of Puerto Ayacucho, 200 m, 11 May 1980, *Steyermark, Davidse & Guánchez 122297* (holotype, VEN; isotypes, F, MO). Figure 1.

Species *Aristolochiae killipiana* O. Schmidt affinis, sed foliis ovatis, pseudostipulis nullis, floribus rectis, utriculis ovoideis, tubis usque ad 12 mm longis differt. Item *A. triangulari* Cham. affinis, sed foliis ovatis cordatis, pseudostipulis nullis, floribus rectis, tubis ad 12 mm longis, seminibus 6–7 mm longis discrepat.

Liana; young stems slightly tomentose, glabrescent, ridged, the nodes swollen. Pseudostipules absent. Leaves alternate; petioles 10–30 mm long; laminae ovate, 7–19 × 3–8 cm, glabrous above, slightly pilose and glabrescent beneath, the base cordate, the sinus 6–17 mm deep, the apex acuminate. Flowers solitary in axils of young growth or solitary on axillary branches to 10 cm long, with a basal bract 3–7 mm long; pedicel and ovary 7–10 mm long, pilose; calyx green marked with brown-purple lines, the utricle ovoid, 5–7 × 4 mm, the tube straight, 9–12 mm long, the limb broadly funnelform, not reflexed, broadly ligulate above, spreading, 12–16 × 9–14 mm, apiculate, yellowish green marked with brown lines and brown-purple to madder-brown spots toward the mouth of the tube, with a broad orange-yellow spot near the apex; gynostemium coroniform, 6-lobed. Capsule ovoid, to 5 cm long, 3–4 cm wide; seeds flat, subcordate, broadly winged, 6–7 × 9–10 mm.

Additional specimens examined. VENEZUELA. TERRITORIO FEDERAL AMAZONAS: Dept. Río Negro, forest and roadside 5–6 km NE of San Carlos de Río Negro, 120 m, 12 Apr. 1979, *Liesner 6561* (MO, VEN); Solano, Río Casiquiare, 20 km NE of San Carlos de Río Negro, 120 m, *Liesner 7373* (MO, VEN); IVIC study site, 4 km NE of San Carlos de Río Negro, 120 m, 01°52'N, 67°02'W, 24 Jan. 1980, *Liesner 8663* (MO, VEN); Dept. Atures, Alrededor de comunidad indígena Piaroa en raudal "ceguera," margen izquierda del Río Autana, 100 m, 04°48'N, 67°28'W, 13 Nov. 1984, *Guánchez et al. 3574* (MO, TFAV, VEN). BOLÍVAR: entre la quebrada Los Brasileños y el camino hacia Playa Blanca y el Río Uaiparú, SE of Icabarú, 450 m, 17 Dec. 1978, *Steyermark et al. 117728* (F, MO, VEN).

This species is dedicated to Emigdio Melgueiro, assistant at TFAV, in acknowledgment of his valuable contributions to the botanical exploration of the Territorio Federal Amazonas in southern Venezuela. *Aristolochia melgueiroi* has been found in the Venezuelan Guayana between 100 and 450 m, mainly in open and disturbed sites such as roadsides and secondary vegetation ("rastrojos"). *Aristolochia melgueiroi* is part of the *A. triangularis* Cham. complex (Schmidt, 1935), which also contains *A. pseudotriangularis* O. Schmidt, a Bolivian species, and *A. killipiana* O. Schmidt, from upland Peru. All the species in this complex are woody lianas with axillary flowers. The flowers are usually less than 3 cm long and have a broadly ovate limb marked with purple spots. *Aristolochia melgueiroi* can be distinguished from all other species in this complex by its lack of pseudostipules. It can be distinguished from *A. triangularis* and *A. pseudotriangularis* by its ovate leaves with deep, basal sinuses and from *A. killipiana* by its smaller utricle, straight flowers, and ovate leaves.

Aristolochia melgueiroi is vegetatively similar to *A. acutifolia* Duchartre, a native of the Amazon basin. However, *A. acutifolia* has flowers with a narrow, ligulate limb that lacks the conspicuous orange-yellow spot at the apex. *Aristolochia melgueiroi* might also be confused with the recently described *A. guianensis* Poncy from French Guiana (Poncy, 1988). The mature leaves of *A. guianensis* have longer petioles and a more triangulate lamina than *A. melgueiroi*, but the juvenile leaves are similar. The flowers of the two species are very

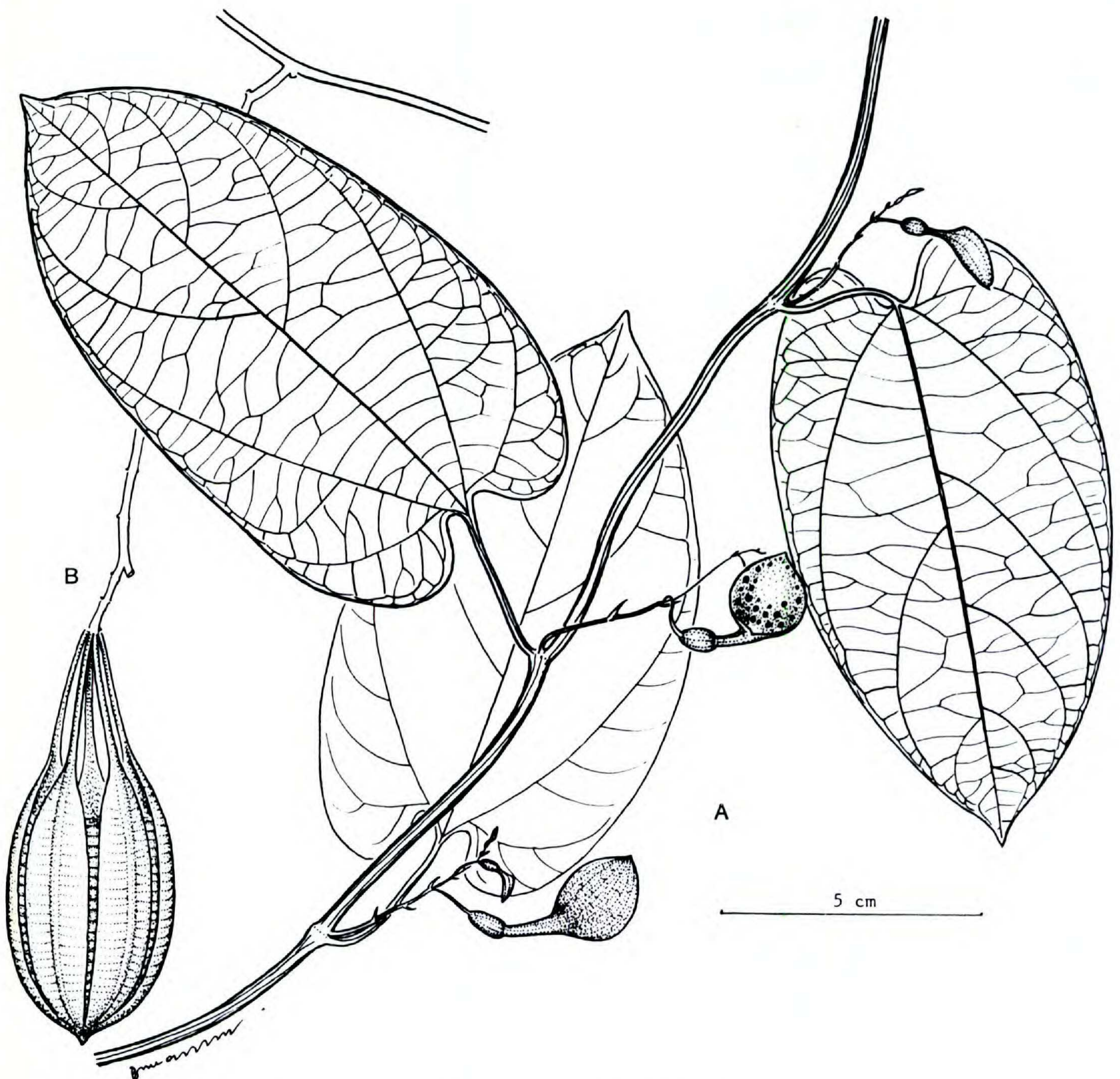


FIGURE 1. *Aristolochia melgueiroi*.—A. Flowering branch.—B. Fruit.

different, though. The flowers of *A. guianensis* have a large, unilabiate limb borne perpendicular to the tube and 5–8 cm long peduncles.

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